

REMARKS

The Office Action dated August 6, 2008, has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims, and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 4-6, 8 and 13 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Claim 3 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, claims 1, 2 and 4-13 are currently pending in the application and are respectfully submitted for consideration.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claim 3 recites allowable subject matter. Claim 3 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer and its subject matter has been added to each of the independent claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 4-6 and 8-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Majima et al. (JP 11-170319). The Office Action took the position on page 2 that Majima et al. teaches all of the features of the rejected claims. Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended herein to recite similar features to cancelled claim 3, which the Office Action indicated recites allowable subject matter. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 1 and 8 patentably distinguish over Majima et al.

Claims 4-6 and 9-13 depend from claims 1 and 8 and add further features thereto. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims patentably distinguish over the cited art for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claims.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome and respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 2 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Majima et al. in view of Kanda (JP 2003-117970). Claims 2 and 7 depend from independent claim 1 and add further features thereto. Per the above, claim 1 has been amended to recite similar features to cancelled claim 3. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims patentably distinguish over the cited art for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claims.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome and respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

For at least the reasons presented above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 2 and 4-13, comprising all of the currently pending claims, patentably distinguish over the cited art. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by

telephone, Applicants' undersigned representative at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,



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